IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Withdrawn) An apparatus for manufacturing an optical fiber soot comprising a core partition provided on a periphery of a core burner, in a reactor of the apparatus to be used in a VAD method.

Claim 2 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said core partition has an opening portion at a core burner side.

Claim 3 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said core partition at least has a height that is same as a position of a core burner nozzle, the core partition has a cylindrical shape having a diameter not less than the diameter of a porous soot, the core partition is provided below the porous soot, and a bottom of the core partition contacts a bottom surface of said reactor.

Claim 4 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the width of the opening portion of the core partition is smaller than the width of the core partition itself.

Claim 5 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the width d of the opening portion of said core partition has a value satisfying: $0.5W(D) < d < 0.8W(D)$ to the width W or the diameter D of said core partition.

Claim 6 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the width d of the opening portion of said core partition is changeable.

Claim 7 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the width d of the opening portion of said core partition is about ten times the bore width b of the aperture of the core burner.

Claim 8 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said core partition rectifies the airflow in said reactor.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended). A method for manufacturing an optical fiber soot having a core burner, comprising steps of:

executing a Vapor-phase axial deposition process in a reactor ~~using an apparatus for manufacturing an optical fiber soot~~,

wherein, ~~in the apparatus,~~ a core partition is provide on a periphery of said core burner, and a bottom of the core partition contacts a bottom surface of the reactor.

Claim 10 (Original): The method according to claim 9, wherein said core partition has an opening portion at said core burner side.

Claim 11 (New): The method according to claim 10, wherein a width of the opening portion of the core partition is smaller than a width of the core partition itself.

Claim 12 (New): The method according to claim 10, wherein the width of the opening portion of the core partition w(d) has a value satisfying: $0.5W(D)<w(d)<0.8W(D)$ to the width W or the diameter D of the core partition.

Claim 13 (New): The method according to claim 10, wherein the width of the opening portion of the core partition w(d) is changeable.

Claim 14 (New): The method according to claim10, wherein the width of the opening portion of the core partition w(d) is about ten times a diameter of the core burner b.

Claim 15 (New): The method according to claim 9, wherein the core partition has a cylindrical shape having a diameter not less than a diameter of the optical fiber soot.

Claim 16 (New): The method according to claim 9, wherein the core partition at least has a height that is same as a position of the core burner.

Claim 17 (New): The method according to claim 9, wherein the core partition is provided below the optical fiber soot.

Claim 18 (New): The method according to claim 9, wherein the core partition rectifies an airflow in the reactor.